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O L D R E M E D Y
N E W R E V I V ' D :
O R , A N

Infallible Method B.

T O P R E V E N T

This C I T Y from Sharing in the
Calamities of L I S B O N .

By a C I T I Z E N .

And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then
will I punish you seven times more for your Sins.
Levit. xxvi. 18.

L O N D O N :

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(Price Six-Pence.)

OLD REMEDY

NEW REMEDY

FOR THE

NEW REMEDY

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NEW REMEDY

NEW REMEDY



TO THE
Christian Reader.

FROM the Arrows of the Almighty falling so thick around, it appears to me that Wrath is gone out against us, and that the Hand of the Lord, is now upon the Earth; and observing with Concern the Dulness and Deadness of Men, Who are like the Horse and Mule that have no Understanding. Their Stupidity seems to me more dreadful than the Punishments wherewith we are threatned. For when a Nation grows stupid and senseless at the Chastisements of God, and doth not, or will not understand God's meaning in them; there goes a Speech from the highest: Why should they be smitten any more? the meaning of which is; instead of a fatherly Correction, there must come a sweeping Desolation.

Therefore to rouse you, my Christian Brethren, from this Lethargic State, I have undertaken (tho' the meanest of a Thousand) to point out to

you the Interpretation of God's Chastisements : For by them God would have something to be done, the doing whereof may cure and remove them. Possibly some in these Days may require a Prophetical Spirit, rightly to interpret the Judgments of God, as the rich Man would fain have had one from the Dead to convert his Brethren; but to these I give the same Answer as was given to him; that the Scriptures are left unto us for sufficient Interpreters.

For God is still one and the same both in Justice and Mercy, and therefore he hath left one and the same Word, whereby to construe his Judgments and Mercies. Accordingly from God's Word in the Old Testament, St. Paul tells us in the New, that God's Punishments on the Israelites in the first Times of the World, are to be Examples to us on whom the Ends of the World are to come. Therefore let us boldly, because safely, march under the Shield of so great an Example, believing with him that now, as heretofore, Punishments and Sins are linked together : indeed, if God would have alter'd his Course, and by a new kind of Government, send general Punishments where there are not general Sins, there might have been need of new Prophets, to have brought us News of a new Dispensation. But before we begin this warrantable Interpretation, let us turn our Eyes to Things most dangerously unwarrantable, the Abuse and Misconstruction of Judgements commonly used.

Some take no Notice at all of the Strokes of this Wrath, but with the Mirth and Madness of

of Wine and Pleasures, take away the Knowledge of it, as the Sacrificers of the Valley of Hinnon, by the Noise of Instruments took away the Cries of their sacrificed Children. Such light-minded Men, singing and dancing to the Viol, and withal forgetting the Miseries of Joseph, no doubt will cry out with Judas, Wherefore serveth this Wast? And with David's Brother, Out of the Pride of thine Heart art thou come down to the Battle. But I answer with David, Is there not a Cause? Yea, even the greater Cause, because the Lyon bath roared, and such Beasts are not afraid; so that the greater the Number is, of these Madmen of Mirth; the greater had need to be the Company of Mourners. It is the Mourning of the Penitent, that maintains the Mirth of the Delinquent, and it is the ten righteous Men, that keep Fire and Brimstone from a Company of abominable Sodomites.

Others there are that gaze on the Stroke, and stand amazed at their Misery, but do not look up to the highest Striker; who, by murmuring and repining, run to bite the Stones that are thrown at them. A third Sort there is, that with earthly Balms will cure the Strokes of Heaven, and by the Strength of their Plots, will bind up the Hands of Omnipotence, and by the Finesse of their little Wits, will supplant the Councils of an infinite Wisdom. All these are out of the Way, and either seek no Remedies, or false Remedies, or Remedies out of Order.

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To obviate such fatal Errors, I have endeavoured in the following Sheets, to point out the only Remedies that can prevent those Calamities from falling upon us ; which are now hanging so heavy over our Heads : And that they may have the desired Effect, is the hearty Prayer of,

Your's, in

Christian Affection,

London,
10 Dec. 1755.

A Citizen.



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OLD REMEDY

NEW REVIV'D, &c.

THE Lord hath roared from the Habitation of his Holiness, and sent forth his Voice. He hath bent his Bow, and prepared his Arrows ; yea, some of them hath he shot, and their Wounds are now fresh upon us : Therefore let us seek a Remedy for the Hurts received, and search out the Means that the remaining Arrows may be retained. For obtaining thereof, even these Arrows themselves will excellently direct us : For they are like the Arrows of *Jonathan* that had a Message in their Wings ; for they can tell us of Wrath, and warn us to avoid it. This very Use of them God himself hath taught us ; in his infinite Mercy desiring and expecting that his Rod may comfort us, and heal us ; and he hath taught us the Means of doing it, and that

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is, by Consideration and laying to Heart. The Lord saith in the Prophet *Haggai*, *Consider your Ways*. Let us therefore hear and consider what God speaks in his Chastisements. That we may better perceive this Truth, let us look stedfastly upon them, and behold the Breadth and Depth of these Stripes, as I think they will point out unto us the very Stamp of divine Indignation. It is an Impression in Nature, when Plagues are considerable in Greatness and unusual, to cry out with the hardened *Egyptians*, it is the Finger of the Lord : And like the heathen Mariners in *Jonah*, call upon their Gods, believing strange Punishments, to be the Effects of divine Wrath.

And that we may in some Measure know what are the Strokes of God's Wrath, let us search into the Catalogue of his Judgments, and amongst them we shall find dreadful Denunciations of Thunders, Lightnings, Pestilence, Famine, Wars, &c. and as a sealing up of the Whole, great and terrible Earthquakes. And to us of late the very Laws of Heaven, seem to have changed, our Summers are turned into Winters, the Seasons of the Year have inverted their Order, and resembled them that have perverted their Lives. The Sun, even in the Pride of his ascending, hath covered his Face with black mourning Clouds, as loath to look upon unmourning Sinners : Yea, the Tears of Heaven, unseasonably in regard of the Year, but seasonably in respect of our Sins, have fallen down, to wash away
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away the Filthiness with which we are defiled. The Fall of the Leaf hath been in Summer, and a Spring in the Fall of the Leaf. Even the remoter Parts of the Globe have undergone an uncommon Change in its Seasons, *viz.* *Greenland*, where they have been visited by the most dreadful Lightning and Thunder, that awful Voice, to which they were till then utter Strangers, the Heats so excessive, that the Snow in the Valleys, where it had been accumulating for many Years, was dissolved, which was never remembered to have been before. And as Men grow every Day worse and worse, so our Wickednesses mount up to Heaven, and, if not mercifully averted, will fall back upon our Heads in fiery Indignation, like *the Vials of God's Wrath* in the *Revelations*, which the Angels poured out upon the Sea and Land, upon Man and Beast, and all Creatures.

Of late Years God has visited us with various Judgments, as a long and bloody War, a Rebellion fomented and carried on in our very Bowels; although that is scarce got over, we are now upon the Eve of another War, which, when once begun, no Man can tell where it may end. We have had, and still have, an epidemical Disease amongst our Cattle, which has continued longer than was ever known to former Ages; and a few Years ago, God sent us two Shocks of an Earthquake, when Paleness seized every Countenance, while his Arm was lifted up against us; but how soon

did the Fear thereof vanish, when the Rod seemed to be graciously withdrawn. So many mild Corrections having no ways affected us, nor have we taken Warning, our utter Destruction seems to be threatned, if not drawing near, for God's Judgments are now abroad, and he is visiting the Earth with fresh Punishments, and by a dreadful Earthquake has overturned the capital City of *Portugal*, and many other adjacent Places, in whose Ruins lie buried many of its Inhabitants, and with them their Families and Fortunes, by means whereof a Stagnation in Trade will ensue, and the Ruin of many private Families follow, with whom they had any Affinity by the Ties of Relation, Friendship, or Commerce; although the worst of this Calamity we cannot as yet be sensible of; nay, by this total Overthrow, the Trade may be turned into a quite different Channel, and become lost to this Nation. Let us not imagine (although this dreadful Calamity was scarcely perceivable here) that God loved us more than them, or that they were greater Sinners then ourselves; *for, except we repent we shall all likewise perish.* For,

St. Paul saith, *That for Sin comes the Wrath of God upon the Children of Disobedience.* As we see the Wrath of God cometh for Sins, let us have an Eye unto our own, and their Greatness will shew them to be such, which may justly draw down the Vengeance of Heaven. To reckon up all our Sins, the
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Number of them has made it almost impossible: I shall only mention some of the most glaring, and such as meet you every where. The first is blasphemous Swearing, wherein there is a Pride taken in offending God; for any other Benefit it has, I think no Man can assign: Yet if those who accustom themselves to this heinous Sin would but consider, they would find all the Reason in the World to forsake it; for, if there be no God, why do I swear by him? If there be a God, how dare I to offend him? If thou swear by nothing, thou art a Fool in thy Swearing; and if thou call for thine own Damnation, thou art a greater. God himself declares, *The taking his Name in vain he will not hold guiltless*: And by the Prophet *Zechariah*, that there is a Curse flying out against Swearers; and by *Hosea*, that the Wrath of God issues out against a Land for swearing.

Drunkennes, the Handmaid of Swearing, comes next under Consideration, which is so flagrant in both Sexes, and in Persons of all Ranks, from the lowest to the highest; yet the higher it is, the more hurtful, as the greater the Light is, the greater is the Darkness by the Loss of that Light; so that this Sin does double Mischief; for, by putting out their Light, there is both the Light of Direction, and the Light of Example lost; and thus the Man becomes worse than the Beast, for they are generally sober, and Man loses the Use of his Soul, whilst the Beast preserves that of his

his Instinct, least, as I fear, we think that this Sin of Drunkenness, by the Frequency of its Practice, is so trivial as to be separated from the Punishments denounced against it : I will therefore recite the Prophecies, which above all Doubt and Exception fix the Punishment to the Commission of the Crime, *viz. Woe unto him that giveth his Neighbour Drink, that putteth thy Bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also : The Cup of the Lord's right Hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful Spewing shall be for thy Glory.* And again, *Woe unto them that are mighty to drink Wine, and Men of Strength to mingle strong Drink.* They cast so much Moisture on the Lamp of their Understanding, that the Light thereof is put out, and the Feathers of a divine and celestial Will are unable to mount ; and so the Soul in her Faculties is slain, and there remains nothing but the Husks and Shell of Men : And ought it not to be a most fearful Crime to Man, that where his chiefest Excellence and Honour is, *viz. The Image of God* — This Vice entirely defaces this Image, and erases it out of the Soul, and so leaves him as base and dishonorable as the Brute Creature whom he despiseth : So that this Excess is Murder, for it kills that which is indeed the Man, his Reason and Understanding ; and as it is thus contrary to the Creation, by defacing that Image of God, which the Creator planted in us : So is it also to Regeneration, and the Recovery of that decayed Image, it being a Murder of the
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second *Adam* in us as well as of the first, even a Murder of Life eternal.

Ingratitude to God is the next Link of the Chain in which our Souls are held in Captivity, which is as fearful and dangerous as the former; and before this Sin can be cured, the manifold Abuses of God's Blessings must be removed: For how can Man be thankful to God for his Benefits, until they leave off offending God by them? Can they (though it it were but in Words) give God any Praise for his Blessings, when in their Deeds they dishonour him? Can it be expected that the Drunkard, Glutton, or Voluptuary should be thankful to God (I say not for the Light of the Gospel, which Owls cannot see) but for Meat, Drink or Apparel, when they all abuse these Blessings into Luxury, Pride and Vanity? Surely, if they should give God Thanks for them, it must be in these Words; I thank thee for giving me these Blessings, which I have converted into Fuel for thy eternal Wrath.

I would willingly pass by the next Sin, which is carnal and unnatural Filthiness; but the Wrath of God doth not suffer it to escape: In respect to the Filth of it, one scarce knows how to mention it, and in regard to the Punishment due to it, I must not be silent; perhaps from seeing the Deformity of this Monster, Men may be brought not only to avoid it, but to destroy it! O, the Drunkenness of Lust, which, like the Drunkenness of *Lot*, takes
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away all Sense of this unnatural Filthiness in the Action, when yet to a sober Mind, the Abomination is painful even in the mentioning. It is like a fed Horse, so wild by Nature, breaks over Hedge and Ditch, and will not be bounded, but by Diseases, Death and Hell: Thus forsaking God's Commands, and running into Sodom, is turning from God and associating themselves to the Devil, whose Office is to kindle the Fire of Lust here, and the Fire of Hell hereafter; for which Cause, *They are given up to Uncleaness through the Lust of their own Hearts, to dishonour their own Bodies between themselves, leaving the natural Use of Woman, burn in their Lust one toward another; Men with Men working that which is unseemly:* Therefore art thou inexcusable, O Man, who-soever thou art, that thus followest thy Lusts, for therein *treasurest thou up unto thyself Wrath against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God, who will render to every Man according to his Deeds.* As this Sin was the Destruction of Sodom, so let us remember that the Uncleaness of Whoremongers and Adulterers was a Sin that cast out the *Amorites*, and brought Vengeance on the *Israelites*: How may we expect to escape the Punishment of these Sins? when God expressly declares, *Whoremongers and Adulterers he will judge:* And that for *these Things he will visit, and that he will be avenged* for the Commission of such Crimes: Who hath given us a Patent of Privilege from God's general Law, but he only
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who is a Liar from the Beginning, and seduced our first Parents, by telling them they should not die, when, by eating the forbidden Fruit, he knew it would bring Death on all ; so doth he deal with us still : He shews us the Fairness of Sin, but hides the Misery that attends it ; affirms the Pleasure, denies the Torment ; sheweth the Bait, but hides the Hook. But let every Soul, who would not be caught in the Snares of the Devil, act in Contrariety to him, as he hides the Punishment, and holds out the Pleasure ; so let him that would be safe, fix his Eye on the Punishment, and turn away from the Pleasure. It is a deplorable Exchange, an Eternity of Misery for a short-lived Pleasure : For what avails thee having had Pleasure, when now thou art in Pain, thy Pleasure will cease, but thy Pain will endure for ever : Therefore, fight against the Fire of Lust in this World, where thou may'st fight and overcome ; and so shalt escape that Fire hereafter, which will otherwise overcome thee for ever : But if notwithstanding thou wilt have the Devil for thy Instructor and Leader, be assured that he who is now thy Guide, will hereafter be thy cruel Scourge and Tormentor.

An Incitement to the Commission of the forementioned Sin proceeds from the Indecency of Dress, or rather of *Nakedness* ; for, by the present Fashion, it appears as if even those of the first Degree, though blessed with a plentiful Fortune, were destitute of Rayment ; who, by

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their *Nakedness*, are brought to a Level with the wretched Inhabitants of *Bedlam*.

Agreeable to this Taste, the Women display their Breasts, declaring their Readiness to give Nourishment to the Babe Lust, which they foster for his Father the Devil. These Signs of Flesh are exposed to View, that when Lust passes by he may walk in and be entertained ; for what other Design can they have in thus exposing their Necks to every Beholder. An ancient Father gives better Counsel : *Clem. Alex. paed. lib. 2. cap. 2. Nullo modo permittendum est Mulieribus ut nudam aliquam partem Corporis offerant Viris, ne ambo prolabantur ; hi quidem, ut qui ad videndum invitentur, illæ vero quæ in se virorum intuitum attrahant.* “ It is by no means to be permitted
 “ unto Women to shew unto Man any naked
 “ Part of their Body, lest both offend : The
 “ Men in being provoked to behold their Na-
 “ kedness, and the Women in tempting Men
 “ to behold it.” A good Woman is a private Good, reserved from All, except preserved for One ; and even her Face, which Use and Nature allow to be seen, should be modestly shewn. The rest of the Body should be like Christ's Spouse, the Pattern of Purity, *even a Garden shut up and walled about.* Cant. 4. 12. As much as the Fair Sex exposes to View, in so much are they common : If single, they have lost so much of their virginal Reservedness ; and, if married, their Husbands particular Interest. It is therefore to be hoped they will
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leave off this foolish *Nakedness*, which only causes Shame, and is the Beggar's Disgrace : How much more to be abhorred is this affected Want, than that which the Vagrants endure through Necessity. Let them take Heed lest God send them or theirs, a true *Nakedness* instead of a false one, as he did heretofore to the Women of *Israel*, which were as fine as most of the wanton ones of this Age. *Because the Daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth Necks, and wanton Eyes, walking and tripping as they go. Therefore the Lord will smite with a Scab the Crown of the Head of the Daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their Nakedness ; or, as it is in the Margin, Make them naked.* Isai. iii. 17, 18.

There is another Sin that calleth for Vengeance, and that is a general Decay and Neglect for Religion, and a total Falling away to all manner of Prophaneness, by a Contempt of the Sabbath, a Day which we are strictly commanded to keep holy, to sanctify, and rest from all our Labours : This ceasing from servile Work, is to further our Sanctification, which cannot be performed without it ; and if Rest should hinder our Sanctification, it ought to be taken away and omitted. Indeed our Saviour Christ acknowledges, *The Sabbath was made for Man, not Man for the Sabbath.* A Portion of Scripture entirely perverted and misunderstood in this apostate Age, the true Meaning whereof is, *Man was not made for Rest* (as the Word Sabbath signifies) but for Sanctifi-

Sanctification.—Sanctification was his End, and Man was made and created for that End—Rest is but a subordinate End, and Man was not made for it, but rather Rest was made for Man.—Rest then is but the Means to attain to Sanctification, which is Man's End, and that for which he was made. For, as the Apostle saith of *bodily Exercise, it profiteth little* : So it may be said of bodily Rest, that it profiteth little, or indeed nothing at all, except it be applied to the Sanctification, for which the Sabbath was ordained ; nor doth God approve of it, without this.

The seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, by which is intimated to us, that the seventh Day is God's own proper Day, which we have no Right to employ as we please ; when we do, are guilty of down-right Theft and Sacrilege, in robbing God of this Portion of Time which he hath reserved to himself ; Therefore let us render unto God that which is God's, and not encroach on that Day, which he hath absolutely claimed as his own. *In it thou shalt do no manner of Work, thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, nor thy Man-servant, nor thy Maid-servant, nor thy Cattle, nor the Stranger that is within thy Gates* ; which Prohibition is very extensive.

1st, As to the Master of the Family, who is or should be an Honour of his House ; *As knowing to whom much is given, of him much shall be required*. He ought to resolve with *Joshua, I and my House will serve the Lord*,
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and to be so far from giving Occasion by his Example or suffering others to violate that Day ; that he together with them must see it sanctified. Also,

2dly, As St. *Augustine* well observes on *Deut.* 20. 5. That if a Man that hath built a House be careful to consecrate it, being but the Fruit of his Hands, then much more lieth the Care upon Parents of consecrating the Fruit of their Loins. We see this careful Affection in *Abraham*, that he would command his Sons to keep the Way of the Lord.

3dly, God's Mercy, Care, and Providence, extend likewise to the Beasts. *Thou Lord* (saith the Psalmist) *shall save both Man and Beast ; how excellent is thy Mercy, O God ?* They extend to the Bodies and Lives of them, for a righteous Man regardeth the Life of his Beast, saith *Solomon*. God here commands Rest to them. And as a further End, by beholding the Beasts at Rest, we might be the more excited to sanctify a Rest ourselves.

Lastly, *the Stranger within thy Gates*. Now the Gates of a House or of a City, in Scripture signifies a Jurisdiction or Protection. So that if a Stranger come to remain within our Gates, or under our Roof, he is to be under our Government as well as he enjoys our Protection ; and therefore is to be under our Care in point of religious Duties. As the Father is to the Family, so is the Magistrate to the City ; as the one should command those of his Household, so the other is to regard them that are
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within his Jurisdiction, that they neglect not their Duties in this Point. *Nehemiah* testified against the People for breaking the Sabbath. God makes the Magistrate an Overseer, to take care that those committed to his Charge are not guilty of the Breach of the first or second Table: He is to call all those to account that are under him for profaning the Sabbath.

Nehemiah commanded his Servants and the *Levites*, that no Burdens should be brought into the City on the Sabbath Day; and a strict Charge is given to the Kings and Princes of Judah concerning the Observance of the Day, with a severe Threatning if they suffered it to be profaned, *Jere.* 17, 18, 19, 20, &c.

The Reasons for the Observation of this Commandment are immutable. Because I have rested after six Days (saith God) therefore shalt thou rest in Honour of me. The Creator is to be imitated by the Creature, and we are, 1st, to contemplate the Works of the Creation on this Day, that so the Memory of it may be continued to keep us from Paganism; for if the Duty of the memorial of the Creation had been duly and successively kept from the beginning, and so continued, that great Doubt which troubled all the Philosophers so much (whether the World had a Beginning) had been taken away. And therefore this Day being one especial means to keep Men from *Atheism* was therefore sanctified by God, to be a Day of Rest. This was one Reason why the not keeping

keeping this Law was so severely punished under the Mosaic Dispensation, as appears by the Man that gathered Sticks upon the Sabbath Day, and was therefore put to Death; which was not only because the Law of the Sabbath, was then newly made (for the ceremonial and typical Part which consisted in Rest) and therefore required the severer Punishment, but also because the not observing of that Day, was in effect a Denial that God created the World.

2dly, *Because the Lord blessed the Seventh Day,* He did not only rest on that Day, but he consecrated it also. The Force of which God saith is, because I have blessed and hallowed it, seeing I have appointed it, see you do not resist me, but submit yourselves to my Ordinance. He that keepeth it not, and *resisteth God's Ordinance, resisteth God himself*; and they that do so, *receive to themselves Damnation*. Therefore that which God hath hallowed we must not pollute.

I might proceed to enumerate various other notorious Sins, with which we abound, the Extent whereof has no Limits. But it is sufficient for my present purpose to have shewn such as deserve our Miseries: Nay, they are heinous enough to bring the Vengeance of Heaven upon Earth, or to carry down the Dwellers on Earth alive into Hell. We may rather wonder at the mercy of God in sparing, than at his Justice in punishing: How it is that he punisheth no more, rather than that he punisheth so much: Therefore let us fear that the
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Curse will come upon us, because we have sinned against God.

The very mentioning the Curses of God, should cause the stoutest to tremble, would he but duly consider it as recited in the 26th of *Leviticus* and 28th of *Deuteronomy*; if we cannot detest Sin by looking it in the Face, and seeing the Deformity, yet let us abhor it by feeling the miserable Effects and Consequences thereof; *viz.* All the Torments of a distracted Soul, the Rack of Conscience, the Terrors of Hell in the Mind: All the Diseases of the Body, Fevers, Pestilences, and Rottenness of the Bones: All the fearful Storms that light on the Things of this Life, Lightning and Tempests, Cold and Fire, Wreck of Estates by Sea or Land: As we loath and detest to endure such Evils; let us remember that the Evils are much greater for which they are suffered: For God doth not go beyond Justice in the Punishment of Mankind, but is yet far short of it: For after all these Evils attending Sin here on Earth, *The Lord shall come in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction.* For as the Word of God is a quickening Spirit, where it doth not enliven it kills; for it is either a quickening Word or a killing Letter. As that which is not purified in the Fire by Melting consumes by Burning; so the Word of God, whom it doth not cleanse by Repentance, it causes to fret and consume unto Ruin and Destruction;

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That these divine Threatnings may have a due Influence upon us, let us consider, that through Sin almost an indelible Character of Darknes and Sensuality being stamped on the Soul, how the Soul can be enlivened, but by the first Enlightener ; and how shall she of sensual be made spiritual, but by a new begetting of the Father of Spirits : What Remedy remains, but that now (as at the first Creation when the Chaos was void and without Form) there is need of another Almighty Fiat, even a Voice from Heaven, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the Dead.* But, alas ! here is the Difficulty ; the Spirit can make him, but it is almost impossible to lead the hardened Sinner, (*who is dead in Trespasses and Sin*), to the Thought of the Spirit, much less to the Spirit himself. *As it is God alone that can create a new Heart, and a new Spirit within us*, let us therefore by Penitence draw near unto him, who is our spiritual Rock, and so fetch Help from his Almighty Aid.

As Repentance is the Means which reconcileth us to the strong and all-sufficient Helper, let us give all Diligence to make this Repentance sure unto us by making it our own, *i. e.* by practising it ourselves ; for then Repentance can only heal us, when applied to our own Souls : As it should be a sure Repentance, so should it be a full one, *i. e.* entire and perfect : For the obtaining which, let us take a View of the several Parts, Accessions, and necessary Improvements thereof ; yea, let us see

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the Crown and Consummation of it ; and not only see, but do it, so that we may be blessed in the Deed ; in order to which, consider,

First, Terror is accompanied with Mercy, and to whom Vengeance is due for their Sins, there is yet allowed Confession of Sins on Repentance : For God doth not presently kill, but first speaks in his Wrath, keeping back awhile the full Stroke of Punishment ; troubling in his Displeasure. Even unto *Pharoah*, a meer Stranger to God, that asked who was God ?— God still retained this Order of his Discipline ; and, by lesser Plagues, gave him many Warnings to leave his Sin of retaining *Israel* : Nor did the greater Plagues, or his final Overthrow come upon him, till all the Degrees of former Plagues were spent upon him in vain. God himself declares this to be the Method of his Chastisements, when he tells the *Israelites*, *That, having punished them sore for their Sins, if they would not hearken and be reformed thereby, he would punish them seven times more* : From whence it appears, that the Fruit expected of his former Punishments, was a Reformation of those Sins for which they were punished. *Elibu*, the Messenger of God unto *Job*, tells him and us, what is meet to be said to God in Affliction : *It is meet* (saith he) *to say thus unto God, I have borne Chastisement, I will not offend any more.* The Apostle declares the Use of God's Chastisements : *We are chastised*, saith he, *that we might profit thereby* ; and the Profit he describes to

to be this, *That we might be Partakers of God's Holiness.* As this is the Lesson taught by God, so have the godly practised it ; and, by his Chastisements, they have turned from their Sins for which they were corrected. *Before I was chastised (saith David) I went astray, but now do I keep thy Law.* The very Rehearsal of Judgments upon Sin, worked in *Josiah* a public Reformation : And *Solomon's* Wisdom, which is a kind of Paraphrase of Scripture, hath this Observation : *Thou chastenest them by little and little that offend, and warnest them by putting them in Remembrance wherein they have offended ; that, leaving their Wickedness, they may believe in thee, O Lord.* The very Hypocrites and Heathens believed, that Conversion from Sin was God's End in his Punishments for Sin : Therefore, the false-hearted *Israelites* being oppressed by the *Philistines* and Children of *Ammon*, ran unto the Lord ; saying, *We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim ; and they put away their strange Gods, and served the Lord.* The *Ninivites*, though God's Judgments were peremptorily pronounced against them, yet they so far take Notice of this Purpose of God, that by Punishments threatened or imposed, God aimeth more at the Destruction of Sins than of Sinners ; that, notwithstanding *Jonah's* [peremptory Affirmation, they would still retain a hopeful Dubitation. Accordingly, the King's Proclamation runs, *Let them turn every one*

from his evil Way, and from the Violence that is in their Hands ; who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce Anger, that we perish not ? God doth not meerly afflict, as *Elibu* teacheth ; but by Affliction doth instruct us ; his Rods give us Knowledge, and open the Ears that were sealed. The Chastisements of God, are like *Sampson's* Lion, though at first they come terribly upon us, and with a Shew of devouring, yet after they yield us the Honey of Instruction and Reformation. As we see the Design of God's Chastisements, and how they have been construed by holy Men of old (nay even the Heathens) so should we consider, receive, and apply them. Let us then hear God's Voice in his Punishments ; let us understand and obey them, and let his Correction bring forth Conversion.

2dly, Consider, That when Man by Repentance turneth from Sin unto God, the Wrath of God, and the Punishments attending it, are turned from Man. When God threatened to pour the full Vials of his Fury on the *Israelites*, even when they pined away in their Iniquities, yet he promiseth, that, upon the Confession of their Sins, Humiliation, and justifying of God in his Punishments for Sin, he would then remember his Covenant with their Fathers. By *Ezekiel*, God telleth us, *Repent, and turn yourselves from all your Transgressions, so Iniquity shall not be your Ruin.* He gives us there particular Cases of this Doctrine,
Ezek.

Ezek. 18. 14, 18, 21. In *Jeremiah* there is a passionate Conference between God and *Ephraim*, which is a lively Representation of God's Dispensation to Man, expressed in these Considerations; 1st, *Ephraim* acknowledgeth to God, that his Chastisements were upon him. *Thou hast chastised me, O Lord, and I was chastised.* 2^{dly}, That his Sins were the Cause of his Chastisements: He confesseth, *That he was like a Bullock, unaccustomed to the Yoke.* 3^{dly}, He shews the Operations of God's Chastisements in him: It stirred him up to call on God for the Grace of Repentance: *Turn thou me and I shall be turned:* And 4^{thly}, The Tenderness of God's Mercy to *Ephraim*, being penitent in most affectionate Words: *Ephraim, my dear Son, and a pleasant Child, since I spake to him, I do earnestly still remember him: Therefore my Bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have Mercy on him.* This one Precedent, if there were no more, is a sufficient Platform of the Cure of our Miseries, either to the Teacher or the Practiser. The Wrath and Punishments, which Sin hath twisted together, Penitence untwineth and dissolveth. Infinite it were to accumulate God's Promises of Mercy to Repentance, or Examples of such Promises performed. Backsliding *Israel* under the Judges, frequently fell back to their Sins, yet often returning from them, were delivered from their Miseries. Even *Ahab*, by the Outside of Repentance, which he wore on his Body, in his Garment of Sackcloth, and went softly,

softly, deferred the Rooting out his Family for the Term of his Life. When *Manasseh* had laden himself and *Judah* with the grievous Sins of Blood and Idolatry, yet *Manasseh* by Repentance is unladen himself: and to *Judah* it is offered by *Jeremiah*, *That yet they should hearken and repent that God might repent of the Evil, which for their Evil-doings he purposed to do unto them.* Accordingly in *Josiah's* Time, which was a Time of Reformation, God spared *Judah*, tho' burdened with these Sins, for one and thirty Years. Such a Blessing to a People is a godly Prince, striving for a true Reformation, tho' attaining but to a seeming one. Thus we see that Repentance for Sin preserveth a Kingdom, tho' tainted with Crimson and crying Sins; even to *Niniveh* a City of the Heathens, and Strangers to the Commonwealth of *Israel*.

From the above Truths extracted out of the infallible Word of God, let us also take the true Pattern of a healing Repentance; there we shall find the true Methods of Repentance, by which God hath been pleased, and our Miseries removed, and let us firmly believe that the same Prescription is left for a perpetual Remedy And is now as efficacious to cure as ever; for the Word of God and the Mercy of God endures for ever. For one entire Place there is scarce a fuller to be found than that in *Joel. 2, 12, &c.* *Turn unto me, saith the Lord, with all your Heart, with Fasting, with Weeping, and with Mourning. And rent your Hearts,*
and

and not your Garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to Anger, and of great Kindness and repenteth him of the Evil. And the Manner of the Fast he describeth. Blow the Trumpet in Zion, sanctify a Fast: Call a solemn Assembly: Gather the People: Sanctify the Congregation: Assemble the Elders: Gather the Children, and those that suck the Breasts: Let the Bridegroom go forth out of his Chamber, and the Bride out of her Closet. let the Priests the Ministers of the Lord, weep between the Porch and the Altar, and let them say; spare thy People, O Lord, and give not thine Heritage to Reproach, that the Heathen should rule over them; wherefore should they say among the People, Where is their God? Then will the Lord be jealous for the Land, and pity his People. This is the Repentance which God telleth us is acceptable. Let us therefore consider and do it, and be confident of our Acceptance.

And if we will follow this Direction, and take a View of the main Parts of Repentance, we shall discover that the first necessary Step to be taken is a Confession of our Iniquities; confessing we must loath and abhor them; and loathing and abhorring them, we must turn to the contrary Righteousness: And to this we must join vehement Invocation. In confessing our Sins, we accuse our Sins justly as the Cause of our Punishments, and we glorify God, clearing him and his Justice in punishing. This is what God calleth the accepting of his Punishment, which is one Condition of removing it; for we cannot

not but approve and accept that Punishment, which we confess, hath been justly deserved. Accordingly *Daniel* begins with Confession, and therein gives the Shame to Man, and Glory to God. Confession by *Solomon* is made the first Step to God's Favour; and St. *John* saith, *If we Acknowledge our Sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins.* Therefore let us lay before our Heavenly Physician all our Diseases; for except we acknowledge our Sicknes, the Physician that came only to heal the Sick, will not heal us; and while we enjoy only imaginary Health, there can be no Conversion, and without Conversion there will be no Cure. How can any turn from those Deeds which they acknowledge not to be Sins? And how can that be amended, which is not known to be a Fault?

To this Confession should be joined a Detestation of Sins confessed. That our Sins may appear loathsome, we need no more than to compare them with God's Law; and the Purity of the one, will clearly shew the Pollution of the other: But if we cannot discern the Deformity of our Sins, let us view them in the Characters that the Servants of God, have drawn them. God expresseth the *Loathsomeness of Sinners* in the Prophet *Ezekiel*, by the *miserable Estate of a Child in his Birth.* *Eze. 16.* Again, *Isa. 1. 6.* A sinful Land is compared to the Body of a Man from the *Head to the Foot turned into one Scab or Sore.* Again, *Isa. 64. 6.* If the Righteousness of sinful Man be compared

compared to a *Cloth of extreameſt Pollutions*,
 what Compariſon can be vile enough for his
 Sinfulneſs? Let us then view ourſelves with
 the ſame View as God looks on us, and then
 we ſhall ſee ourſelves with the ſame Abhor-
 rence as he does. A ſpiritual Eye-Sight,
 quickened by the Eye-Salve of the Spirit, would
 make both us and *Laodicea* clearly to diſcern our
 Blindneſs, Nakedneſs, and Miſery. If a *Drun-*
kard with ſober Eyes could ſee himſelf *drunk*,
 he would appear to himſelf as a moſt deteſtable
 and beaſtly Apparition. If a *Swearer*, with a
 temperate Soul, and an awful Senſe of his
 Creator, could hear himſelf *Swearing*, *Cur-*
ſing, and tearing his Maker and Redeemer;
 would he not think it was a Madman he heard,
 one infinitely more diſtracted than he that
 curſeth his Father, or draggeth his Mother by
 the Hair of her Head. Surely, the greater the
 Father, the greater the Madneſs of the Son,
 that diſhonours and deſpiſeth Him. If the
Grinder of the Poor, with an impartial Eye
 (ſuch is the Spiritual) could behold his de-
 vouring of the Poor by fretting *Oppreſſion*, and
 ſee how his Heart pants for the Day that ap-
 proacheth, how the Childrens Faces are made
 moiſt with Tears, and dried up again by the
 blaſting Breath of the *Extortioner*, which firſt nip-
 ped the Heart of the Father, he would appear
 to himſelf worſe than a Cannibal; for the Can-
 nibals kill Men commonly before they Eat them,
 but theſe Eat Men alive; they begin firſt with the
 Heart, and after that is deſtroyed, they conſume
 the whole Body. Let us therefore look on
 E our

our fleshly Corruptions with spiritual Discernment, and we shall discover their Abominations—As an Example of this Truth, take but a natural Man, with the small Remains of God's Image, given in the Creation, and left by the Fall, and behold him in the Chamber of Death, when the Flesh is quieted and deadned by Weakness, when the Soul is in some Degree at liberty to use her own Light, and therewith to behold the Sins done in the Body; for then a Sin will appear out of Measure sinful, and in its own proper Deformity. At which last Period Man will truly weigh and consider the Wrongs that he hath done, and will then find that he hath committed many Evils. So that the remaining Moments of his Time will be spent in wretched Despair. To avoid which, let us in the Time of our Life which is called *to-day* and by the Light of the Spirit, that *Day-Star* of our Life, behold the Deformity of our Sins, and so by a preventing Examination put away both them and their Terror; and not defer this serious Business to the Night of Death, *wherein no Man can Work*; But in our Life-time with *Joshua*, *Zech. 3, 3. 4.* Put off the Rags of our Filthiness, and with the invited Guests put on the Wedding-Garment, that when the Bridegroom calls, we have no other Business, but to enter with him into his Eternal Joys.

The Natural Consequence arising from this Detestation of Sin, is an Indignation with our Sins and ourselves for sinning. Which will
Work

Work in us true Humility, and cause us to humble ourselves before God, with pure and lowly Hearts, in *Mourning, Fasting and Repentance*; but then let us not trust in our Tears, nor our Works, as Satisfaction for Sin, that merits Forgiveness, but in the Mediation of our only Advocate *Jesus Christ*: For it is *Christ's* Blood alone that satisfies God's Justice; and Humiliation and Penitence fit us for receiving of his Merits and Satisfaction. As *Christ* died for Sin, so *Christians* must die to Sin; that being thus conformed by the Death of *Christ*, his Death may work in them the Death of Sin; for his justifying Death is imparted to them by a mortifying and sanctifying Spirit, and by this Means their humble and penitent Hearts, are fitted for God's Absolution; and so the Death of *Christ* becomes the Ransom of their Sins, when the Spirit of *Christ* in Penitence, has purged away the Pollution and the Guilt of them.

To the Detestation of and Humiliation for Sin, must inseparably be joined a Conversion to Righteousness; in order to which let us take care first to forsake Sin ourselves and then endeavour to prevail upon others to do the same. Let every Man according to the King of *Nineveh's* Proclamation, put away the Evil that is in his own Hands, and the Beam which is in his own Eye. Let every Man sit in Judgment on himself, and take a survey of his Life, and examine by what Sins he hath offended, and from those very Sins let him turn with full Purpose of Heart, never to do them again. Let there be a solemn Hatred, a Dissention; yea, an ut-

ter Separation between our Souls and our Sins : and let us cast them out as Garments that carry in them the Infection of the Plague; even of all God's Plagues and Punishments. Neither let us only search out our Sins and forsake them, but let us strive to attain unto a solid and powerful Goodness : For such a Goodness is only able to keep out Sin, we having to do with powerful Temptations and a strong Tempter. Thin and shadowy Holiness, and a shew of Goodness, betrays us to all Offers of Sin ; let it suffice that we have already received so many Hurts, by being armed with too slight an Armour for a Christian Soldier, even with a talking and not a walking Holiness. But strive by all Means to fortify the Spirit in us, by which we are fortified against the Spirit which is in the World ; and let us not leave praying, fasting, reading, meditating, till we discern the quickening Power of the Holy Spirit, whose Strength is the great Preservative against Sin, and the main Establisher of our Feet in the Way of Peace and Holiness.

Neither must we move ourselves only to confess, detest and forsake Sins ; but we must endeavour to draw others also to the same Duties of Repentance ; and so let us strive compassionately to save each other from the Fire of God's Wrath. If you ask where this should begin ? I will tell you where it hath begun : When a general Destruction threatned *Judah*, *Jehosaphat*, the King of *Judah* feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed

a FAST throughout all *Judah*. When *Josiah* heard but the Threatnings of God against Sins, and knew that those Sins were committed, to which those Threatnings belonged ; *The King stood in his Place, and made a Covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his Commandments, his Testimonies, and his Statutes, with all his Heart, and all his Soul, and caused all that were present to stand to it.* When *Jonah* did but pronounce the Sentence of Destruction upon *Nineveh*, *The King arose from his Throne, he laid his Robe from him, and covered him with Sackcloth, and sat in Ashes ;* and it was proclaimed through *Nineveh*, by the King and the Nobles : *Let neither Man nor Beast, Herd nor Flock, taste any thing ; let them not feed, nor drink Water ; but let Man and Beast be covered with Sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God ; yea, let them turn every one from his evil Way, and from the Violence that is in their Hands.* And as sure as they repented, so sure were they preserved. Now St. Paul saith, *That the Things which were written heretofore, were written for our Instruction.* The greatest Power worketh the greatest Effects, and a Reformation is never so public, as when they that have Authority over the Public direct it. The **MAGISTRATE**, by good Laws, and a due Execution of those Laws, and by good Example, is a most **CATHOLIC REFORMER**. The People took Notice of *David's* fasting for the Murder of *Abner*, and it pleased them ; for, whatsoever the King did, that pleased

pleased the People : And not only the *superior* Magistrates are Causes of Reformation, but the *inferior* in being careful to suppress VICE by lawful Punishments, and to strengthen VIR-TUE by legal Encouragements : Yea, their Examples also may communicate either much *Goodness*, or much *Infection*. Next to the *public* Magistrate, the Minister of the Gospel is a most public Person : Therefore it concerns him also to tell the People their Sins, and to call them from their Transgressions. *Ezra*, the *High-priest*, prepared his Heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in *Israel* Statutes and Judgments : *Yea, he rent his Garments for the Sins of the People, and called them to the reverſing of their Sins, until the fierce Wrath of the Lord ſhould be turned away from them.* This hath been the chief Office of the Priests and Prophets of God, to turn them from their Sins, and ſo to turn away the Punishments due to them. Theſe are the Watchmen ſet upon the Tower of divine Speculation, looking a far off to ſee both the Sins of the People, and the Punishments of God coming for their Sins, they call to *Ababs*, to Sinners, to eſcape betimes from the Tempeſts that will follow. In *Iſaiab*, a Watchman ſtandeth in the Watch-tower, and ſpeaks unto Sinners. *The Morning comes, and alſo the Night, if ye will enquire, enquire ye, return, come.* *Jeremiab* was ſet in a Watch-tower, and then the Word of the Lord comes to him, *Make your Ways good, and your Actions right : And think*

think not to steal and kill, and swear falsely, and to worship Idols, and to trust in the Temple of the Lord; for as I destroyed Shiloh, for the Wickedness of Israel, so will I destroy the Temple for the Wickedness of Judah.—Ezekiel is set on a Watch-tower to receive the Word from God, and to deliver it to the People. If God say to the Wicked he shall die, the Prophet himself shall die, if he do not tell this Message of Death to the Wicked.—Habbakuk stands in his Watch, to hear what the Lord will say unto him, and having received the Word of the Lord, he proclaims it to the People. Woe be to him that covets an evil Coveteousness, to set his Nest on high above the Reach of Misery. Woe be unto him that builds a City with Blood, and that establisheth it with Iniquity. Woe be unto him that giveth Drink to his Neighbour, adding his Bottle, and making him drunk, that he may behold his Shame. Christ Jesus himself, the Mediator of the New Testament, and our chiefest King, Priest and Prophet, to the Scribes and Pharisees, expresth their Sins, and denounceth the Woes belonging unto them. Jerusalem herself he calls with Tears to Repentance, offering to gather her under the Wings of an Almighty Protection: Our Saviour would, but Jerusalem would not. St. Peter, also an excellent Scholar of that all-powerful Teacher, tells the Jews plainly, That they have denied the Holy One, and desired a Murtherer, and killed the Prince of Life; and withal he calls them

them to Repentance and Conversion, *That their Sins may be blotted out when the Times of refreshing shall come.* It fully appears from hence, that it is the Office of the Ministers to see the Sins of the People, to see Judgments of God coming upon those Sins, and by Repentance to call the People from their Sins, and so to save them from the Judgments. Therefore even at this Day must the Ministers be *Seers*, they must see Sins, and see Judgments. And they must be *Cryers* as well as *Seers*; for when they see the Sins, they must give Men Notice of the Punishments that attend them, and when they see the *Plagues*, they must give Men Notice of the Sins that cause them: Yea, when they see both, *as at this Time*, they must give Notice of both. Even now is the Word *Clama* sent out to the Ministers, to cry aloud and spare not, even to lift up their Voice as a Trumpet. Wherefore let them not be silent, and hold their Peace for *Zion's* sake, lest the Prophet die for not speaking, and the People for not hearing: Better it is to cry aloud, a Cry of Penitence that brings forth Safety and Rejoicing, than to cry bitterly hereafter in a Cry of Torment, when there shall be none to deliver. Therefore, let each Pastor take Heed to the Flock, whereof the Holy Ghost hath made him *Overseer*, and search and discover the Sins that are most dangerous, and set those Sins and their Danger before them who are committed
to

to his Charge : Let him call upon his Flock strongly for Repentance, even this three-fold Duty of Repentance, *Confession*, *Detestation* and *Conversion*, and strive by these Means to dismount the Sins of the Time, which are like so many Batteries erected against us, being full charged with the Judgments of God. If carnal Security could truly say (as it is ready to say any thing, even to Sin quietly unto Death, rather than to take the Pains of Repentance) that there is no Fear of such a Wrath, as speculative Men may forge out of their Imagination ; yet this is all the Danger on this Side, that, by persuading them to Repentance, Men are less sinful, more just, and more safe : Whereas, on the contrary, if our Sins, and God's Judgments are so near together, as the above-cited Proofs do inforce, the Danger of Unrepentance is no little one, but an utter Overthrow, and an Abomination of Desolation. Next to the *Minister*, let me speak to the Master of a Family, who is a kind of public private Person. For an House is a little Church, and a little Commonwealth ; and of many such little Churches and Commonwealths, doth the great Church and Commonwealth consist. Accordingly, in this little Church, the Master of the Family hath Leave to inform by Instruction ; and in this Commonwealth he hath Power to reform by Correction, when Instruction will not serve. *Abraham* was loved and commended, because he and his House served the Lord ; *Jacob* also purged and reformed his House, putting out the strange
F Gods

Gods that were therein. *David* promiset^h Reformation in his House, as well as his Kingdom. *He that worketh Deceit shall not dwell in mine House; he that telleth Lies, shall not tarry in my Sight.* The Masters of Families following these Examples, a general Reformation would ensue. Therefore let every Man see what Swearing and Blasphemy, what Drunkenness and Luxury, what Extortion and Oppression; nay, whatever Sin is in his House, and cast out from it the Sin, and the Person, if not reformed. The House of the Wicked saith, *Solomon shall be overthrown; but the Tabernacle of the Righteous shall flourish.* Again: As Wickedness makes a Man's House to Decay, so many wicked Houses together makes the Land to decay: Every Master that does not reform his House, is the Undoer of his Family, and a Traitor to his Country. *Lastly,* Let every Friend to his Friend, and Neighbour to his Neighbour (though he be such a one as the *Jews* were to the *Samaritans*) by Admonition, Example and Instruction, admonish him to a Reformation. If thou see'st thine Enemy's Ox go out of the Way, thou must turn him in the Way; how much more his Soul, wandering in the Way that leadeth to Destruction? For thine own sake thou shouldest do it; for, by his Sin, the Land and thou therein may be punished: Whereas, by reforming his Sin, thou and the Land may be spared, But if the Wicked will not be reclaimed from his Wickedness, let the Righteous mourn for them

them, and strengthen each other in Righteousness ; so that, that which is wanting in the Wicked, may be made up by the Godly, thus making a double Mourning, one for their own, and another for other Mens Sins ; by which they have at the least this Benefit ; they will be marked as true ^{you} Mourners by God, *Ezek. ix. 4.* Let the Godly also strengthen each other in Piety and Godliness ; for they, through their Faith in Christ, and his Merits, are the Buttresses of a Kingdom ; and the more ruined Condition a Kingdom is in, the stronger should be the Supports that uphold it : Ten such *Pillars* would have supported *Sodom* from falling, and their Prayers would have cried louder in God's Ears for Mercy, than the Sins of Thousands did for Vengeance. If they cannot save a Multitude of Sinners, yet themselves shall be saved *from Wrath in the Day of Wrath.* When the Wicked were stout against God, they that feared the Lord, spake often one to another : The Lord hearkened and heard it, and a Book of Remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his Name. *And they shall be mine (saith the Lord) in the Day that I make up my Jewels, and I will spare them as a Man spareth his own Son that serveth him.*

Lastly, To our Repentance, let us join the irresistible Prayer of Faith : I call it irresistible, because it was never known, that Prayer, joined to Repentance, was denied. Therefore, in the Prophet *Joel*, when God shews how he

may be overcome, having enjoined Penitence, even a Confession and Detestation of Sin (expressed in fasting and weeping) and a Conversion from Sin unto God : He also adds, *Let the Priests and the Ministers of the Lord between the Porch and the Altar say, spare thy People, O Lord, and give not thy Heritage to Reproach, that the Heathen should rule over them, Wherefore should they say among the Heathen, where is their God ?* Observe what immediately follows ; *Then will the Lord be jealous for his Land, and pity his People.* The Prayer of a truly penitent Heart is a most acceptable Sacrifice : For a penitent Heart itself, as *David* says, is by Excellence the Sacrifice of God ; and an Altar to Prayer, from which ascends a Sacrifice of sweet Savour in the Presence of the Almighty. *David* truly directs his Song, when he saith, first, *Depart from Evil and do Good, seek Peace and pursue it ;* and seconds it thus : *The Eyes of the Lord are upon the Righteous, and his Ears are open to his Cry.* The Children of *Israel* had often mocked with God in a false and short Repentance, so that God had put them off with a Denial ; but putting away their Idols, and joining to their Repentance vehement Invocation, *they were heard in that they feared.* So true is that of *Elihu.* *The penitent Man shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he shall see his Face with Joy.* It is Sin only that clogs our Prayers, and prevents their ascending unto God, and makes them unfavoury in the Nostrils

trils of the Almighty. If therefore our Sins are put away, and our Prayers are offered up in Pureness of Heart, we may be confident they will be heard : The Lord hath said it, whose Words are stronger than the Covenant of the Sun and Moon. *Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer, thou shalt cry, and the Lord shall say, here I am.* Wherefore let us depart from Evil, and then confidently call upon the Name of the Lord ; and be assured of being heard: *Hierom (in Lament. cap. 3.)* says : *Juxta Johannis Vocem : 1 Joh. 3. Tunc confidentiam in Oratione accepit, cum sibi Vitæ pravitas nulla contradicit, & bonorum Operum ratio orationi convenit, i. e.* “ According to St. “ *John’s* Doctrine, 1 *Joh. 3.* Then is the “ Heart confident in Prayer when it hath not “ the Check of a wicked Life ; but good “ Works do accompany good Prayers.” If it be thus, than do we know a sure Way to prevail with God ; then why do we not prevail ? Let us never complain of God, but of ourselves, if we are not saved, for he hath promised Deliverance to the Prayer of the Penitent, and that in the End it will be prevailing, This is the Way, let us walk in it, let us lie down in it, and with the Woman in *Canaan*, let Delays, or seeming Denials, increase the Strength of our Cries, for there is no doubt but Importunity will prevail ; and if our Prayers ascend incessantly unto God, our Saviour will come to us assuredly with Healing in his Wings.

But

But if the present Punishments do not bring forth this Fruit of Repentance, wherewith they are in Travail, then let us enter into a third Consideration, and that is, that where God's lesser Punishments prevail not to Amendment, there the greater will issue forth and prevail unto Destruction. This is a most lamentable Cure of our Sins, and far more bitter than that Portion of Repentance which Men so much abhor.—Repentance with Sorrow bringeth forth Joy, but in Destruction, Sorrow brings forth only Sorrow.—God himself gives us the Character of it. *A trembling Heart, and Failings of Eyes, and Sorrow of Heart. Thy Life shall hang in doubt before thee. In the Morning thou shalt say, would God it were Even, and at Even thou shalt say, would God it were Morning.* This is the Fruit of Impenitence, and not without Reason, since God hath proclaimed; *If yet we will not be reformed by lesser Punishments, but walk contrary to God, then will God walk contrary to us, and punish us seven times more for our Sins.* If Men obey being chastised (saith Elibu) *they shall spend their Life in Prosperity, and their Years in Pleasure: But if they obey not, they shall perish by the Sword, they shall die without Knowledge; the Hypocrites in Heart heap up Wrath, they cry not when God bindeth them.* Job 36. 11, 12, 13. Here is a clear Discovery of the End and Issue of two contrary Paths. The Path of Repentance leads to Pleasure and Prosperity; but insensible Obstinacy, to Death and

and Destruction. There is Life and Death set before us ; which shall we choose, or rather how can we hesitate at the Choice, since there is so considerable a Difference, that even Blindness itself herein might be Chooser ? O, let us make a right Use of the lesser Punishments, even by Repentance to remove them, and not by Impenitence to change them into greater. I must confess, that both Repentance and Impenitence remove God's lesser Chastisements ; Repentance removeth them, by removing the Causes of them, and those are our Sins : But Impenitence removeth them by removing the Effects, which God would have produced by them.—For God, by these Punishments, would have Repentance wrought in us, but Impenitence suffers not God to have this End in his Punishments. And then God doth also remove his Chastisements ; but this Ease is the greatest Misery of all, and it were better to be still chastised than to be thus eased : For while the Rod is burning, and the Sword whetting, Chastisements are then changing into utter Destructions. It is a most fearful Speech, *Why should they be smitten any more ?* they wax worse and worse. The hardened Sinner may imagine that he hath gotten an excellent Advantage by his profitting in Sin, when sinning more, he shall be smitten no more.—But let him see that which follows, and then he will wish he had still been smitten as before. *Your Country is desolate, your Cities are burnt with Fire, your Land Strangers devour*

devour in your Presence, and it is desolate as overthrown by Strangers. A sorrowful Privilege, not to be stricken any more, but instead thereof, to be swept away by an utter Desolation. Let us not rejoice, but tremble at such Sun-blasts, which are followed with these raging Showers of Wrath and Vengeance. If the Drops of his Wrath have thus afflicted us, how will the great Showers of his Indignation waste us? *Stilla ad Africum, &c.* saith *Hierom*, (*in Ezek. lib. 1. cap. 1.*) “ Drop thy
 “ Word to the South—Drop thy Word, that
 “ the whole Wrath seem not to be poured out,
 “ but some Drop, or Part of it. But if a Drop
 “ be so full of Terror, how terrible shall we
 “ think are the whole Showers of his Wrath?”
 Let not then the Drops seem little to us, lest we feel the Showers too great for us.

The best and safest Way is to make our Sins, and God's Judgment, appear in their true Greatness; for when we truly see their Greatness, that Sight in penitent Men makes them both to grow lesser: But when they both seem less than they are, then they both grow bigger. Neither let us be so self-loving, as to think the Punishments which we have suffer'd are not great enough to enforce a general Humiliation. For one or two of these Punishments have been a Ground sufficient for the Prophets of God to call for a Public Penitence. *Joel* calleth for *Lamentation and Fasting*, because *God's Army the Canker and Caterpillar, had destroyed their Fruits.* And *Haggai* calls the
 People

People to the Consideration and Amendment of their Ways, because they *sowed much and reaped little, and put their Wages into a broken Bag.*

“ And a Reverend Father of the Antient Church (*Greg. Nazien.*) upon a Tempest of Hail, calls on the People to possess their Souls in Tears, to sanctify a FAST, and to amend their Lives” Let us therefore be no wiser than the Prophets and Saints ; Yea let us be no worse than the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, whom *John Baptist* termed a Generation of Vipers, and yet were forewarn’d to flee from the Wrath to come. Let us make Profit of God’s Chastisement, and let that Profit be Repentance, and the Gain we shall have by Repentance will be the removing of the Chastisements.

Let us speak unto God in the Words of *Ezra*, “ After all that is come upon us for our evil Deeds, and for our great Trespas, seeing that thou our God has punished us less than our Iniquities deserve, and has given such Deliverance as this, should we again break thy Commandments, wouldst thou not be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us ?” Since God’s Punishments have been less than our Sins ; yea, he hath given us many Deliverances, should we partake with Sins and Sinners any more, that so by increasing our Sins we may increase our Punishments until they amount to a final Destruction ? “ It is meet to be spoken unto God, (saith *Elibu*) I have born Chastisements, I will not offend any more.” — Let us from the

Heart make a Covenant with God, and say, we have born Chastisement, we will offend no more—Let us be contented with these Punishments, which we have already received, and let us not by Continuance in Sins make them too little for us—Let us rather pray unto God:—Let not all our Trouble seem little unto Thee, which hath come upon us, but give us so great a Repentance, that it may make our Troubles seem great unto Thee, and grow lesser upon us.

O LORD, HEAR, O LORD FORGIVE,
O LORD HEARKEN AND DO IT.

F I N I S.